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756
796 followed by twelve speeches of a general and explanatory character. Then comes the "strengthening" ritual, and immediately after two exceedingly long myths, describing the initiation of the first man into the secrets of the lodge, as well as the symbolic meaning of the shooting ritual. All now undress and take a sweat bath. Female candidates are excluded. A number of short speeches follow, and the whole concludes with the exit ritual.

[515] [534] The drum and gourds are used to accompany the songs. The basic ritual is perhaps present to a certain extent. The writer, however, was not permitted to witness the ritual, and for this reason the procedure seemed somewhat hazy to him.

When the ritual and the sweat baths are over there is a slight pause. The candidate, the ancestor host, and his band enter the medicine lodge, and after taking their seats sing a few songs. When the last song is concluded the other bands enter in the order of their invitation. Now comes the entrance ritual, followed by the smoking ritual. Thereupon the ancestor host rises and delivers the opening speech of the basic ritual. The ancestor host does not go through the entire basic ritual at this time, because he is not permitted to begin the shooting ritual. Soon after the beginning of the basic ritual by the ancestor host, generally after the second speech, gourds and drums are passed to the leader of the east band. This one rises and begins the basic ritual, which he interrupts at the end of the second part, in order to begin the general shooting ritual. When that is finished he continues the third and fourth parts of the basic ritual. Then drum and gourds are passed to the north band. Its leader now in turn begins his basic ritual, but stops after the second part, where the presentation-of-food and the smoking rituals intervene. It is now about midnight, and the feast is given. As soon as the feast is finished and the lodge has been cleared of food and eating utensils, the leader of the north band continues up to the third and fourth parts of the basic ritual. The leaders of the west and south bands perform the basic rituals without any interruption, except, of course, that of the general shooting ritual between the second and third parts. The drum and gourds have now reached the ancestor host, who goes through the third and fourth parts of the basic ritual. There is, however, some doubt as to whether this is always done. Then follows the exit ritual and all pass out to rest for a few hours.

A short time preceding dawn the candidate and the leaders of the east and north bands and the ancestor host, each with two assistants and all other members who are privileged to do so, leave the lodge and walk to the brush where the candidate is to be initiated into the mysteries of the sacred shell and the shooting. Each band must have one or more of its members present at this ritual. When they are near the place set aside for the secret ritual the order of marching,

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FIRST DIVISION OF THE CEREMONY—IN HONOR OF THE THUNDERBIRDS

Introductory remarks by Blowsnake, informant.—In winter, in mid-winter, then it was that I used to pour tobacco.[1] That was the time I would go out and hunt for game. 539X 796X

Well, to-night, a vapor bath I shall take, and if I can secure food for boiling, that kind of a feast I shall give. As many of the leaders as have come, that many shall be with me as I take a vapor bath in the sweat lodge. We are now about to enter the sweat lodge, for everything is in readiness.[2] [515]

SWEAT-LODGE RITUAL

We entered the sweat lodge and undressed, and after we had entered they (the outsiders) closed the lodge covering. I took both the tobacco and the other things I was to use as offerings with me." [782]

Host's salutation and initial speech to participants.—"I greet you; I greet you all, war-bundle owners.[3] My grandparents, especially my grandfather,[4] had concentrated their minds upon this for me. The fireplace with which they blessed my grandfather,[5] that I am going to ask for myself. However weakly I may wobble about,[6] my elders will aid me. I am now going to pour a little tobacco and offer, my elders, whatever feast I am able to. War-bundle owners, I send forth my greetings to you. War-bundle owners, I greet you. Ye elders, I am about to pour tobacco for them (the spirits)." 796X 539X 782

Host's offering to Earthmaker. "Hearken, Earthmaker, our father, I am about to offer you a handful of tobacco." My ancestor Djō-henagwi'exga[7] concentrated his mind upon you. The fireplaces with which you blessed him;[8] the small amount of life you granted to him; all, four times the blessings you bestowed upon my ancestor, that I ask of you directly. Also that I may have no troubles (in life)." 539X 793 782 776

Host's offering to the chief of the Thunderbirds.—"To you, who live in the west, our grandfather, chief of the Thunderbirds, a handful of

[1] "Pouring tobacco" is the ritualistic term for giving a feast.

[2] The informant has passed to the present tense now, for he is actually giving an account of the last War-bundle Feast he gave and imagining that the writer is present.

[3] The word tobacco in Winnebago rituals is used as a generic expression for an offering. Thus the word [illegible]je means, literally, "What we are to offer as tobacco."

[4] Literally, "Children of the bundle."

[5] He does not really mean grandparents, but elders.

[6] The word here used for fireplace is a ritualistic one. It means, literally, "That one thrown within something, i. e., an offering." It also has here the secondary meaning of food.

[7] Used metaphorically.

[8] I. e., the regular offering.

[9] An ancestor of the informant.

[10] Here "fireplaces" means blessings, for only those who had blessings could erect fireplaces, and as a fireplace was erected for each separate spirit, the greater their number the greater the number of blessings. In all rituals it is customary to speak of blessings received, as well as of personal accomplishments, with an exaggerated modesty.

Crashing Thunder

I ran away from the two
*159 women with whom I had been living. We spent some
224 time hunting. Every morning we would get up very
[839] early, stay out the whole day and not return until the
night. Often although we had been on our feet all
[264] day we would not find time to have our noon meal. At
night, regularly, we would take our sweat-baths. We
took these sweat-baths because they are supposed to
[189] act as magical charms to ensure success in hunting. It
[515] was always very refreshing to take them and then
plunge into cold water, whether at night or in the
morning.

[P. 132]